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ABSTRACT

The first six of the eight brief papers presented in this document, all produced in 1990 and all discussing critical issues in Massachusetts public education and describing "visions" for addressing these issues, were published in a slightly different format from the last two papers. For each of the issues presented, a "challenge" section, printed on the left-hand side of the booklet, defines the problem(s), while a "response" section, printed on the opposite side, identifies needs and and recommends appropriate action. For each issue also, a "frame" outlined in black and overlapping both sides, projects succinct ideas ("visions") on how the issues might be addressed during the next decade. The titles are: "Early Childhood: Building Blocks for School Success"; "Parent Involvement: A Critical Element in Children's Education"; "Educational Personnel: Issues for the 1990s"; "School Restructuring"; "Adult Literacy and Empowerment in Massachusetts"; and "Expanded Strategies for Learning." The last two papers, published six months later, are called, respectively, "Linking Schools and Human Services" and "The School as a Community Center." The "challenge," "vision," and "response" categories are still used, but are presented in simple sequence. All eight papers are intended to provide images, not a detailed blueprint, for expanding educational opportunities and creating fundamental equity. Linking them all are several themes that reflect the revolutionary social and economic changes that occurred in the 1980s decade. (LMI)

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# IMAGES of the FUTURE

*Proposed Visions for Public Education in Massachusetts in the 21st Century*

*The Massachusetts Department of Education*
*Harold Raynolds, Jr.*
*Commissioner*

*May 1990*

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Citizens and educators of Massachusetts:

These Vision Papers are an open invitation to a dialogue about our shared hopes for the education of the citizens of this Commonwealth. If we can imagine the future, we can create it. Without our imagination, events and inertia may create the future for us.

In the nineteenth century, Massachusetts was a national, indeed international, pioneer in public education. This preeminence has faded. As a state whose major resource is people — skilled, knowledgeable people — Massachusetts has no choice but to reassert its leadership in public education, and in a way that serves and utilizes its extraordinary ethnic and cultural diversity. This leadership, however, must be inspired and informed by a unifying vision of where we must go if we are to provide the foundation for a productive life for all of our citizens.

The following six Vision Papers discuss critical issues in public education and describe visions for how these issues should be addressed during the next decade. Linking these papers are several themes that reflect the revolutionary social and economic changes that have occurred in the last decade. Addressing these challenges is not only a matter of expanding opportunities for education: it is an issue of fundamental equity.

These six papers offer images, not a detailed blueprint. Only action and commitment at the local and state levels can fill in the details and create the future that is imagined in these papers. We hope that these papers will stimulate the dialogue that is the first step toward creating a future in which all children and adults have every opportunity to develop to their maximum potential.

Sincerely,

Harold Raynolds Jr

Harold Raynolds, Jr.
Commissioner of Education

# Early Childhood: Building Blocks for School Success

## *The Challenge*

There is a need for high-quality early childhood programs for all children. Research has clearly demonstrated the positive long-term benefits of such programs, including success in school and later life experiences, which are particularly dramatic for young at-risk children. Yet, while 52 percent of families with annual incomes above $20,000 enroll their children in preschool, only 29 percent of the families with annual incomes below $10,000 do so.

By 1995, two-thirds of all preschool-aged children will have mothers in the work force — an increase of more than 50 percent over the 1986 figure. This trend is a result of the increase in single parent families and the growth in the number of families in which both parents must work.

*(continued on page 4)*

## THE VISION

- All children, regardless of race, ethnic background, home language, religion, family income, disability, or gender have access to high-quality early childhood and after-school programs.
- Schools play a broader role in supporting families. Schools assist parents in developing the skills and knowledge essential for positive family environments by developing ways to help families care for and educate their children.
- Schools take a more active role in promoting business and

## The Response

Without the early intervention provided through these programs, many children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, will have difficulty taking advantage of the learning opportunities available in their schools. Early childhood units must be established in each school to provide developmentally appropriate and continuous learning experiences for children ages three through eight.

With the increase in single parent, teen, and two parent working families, agencies must coordinate early childhood resources and programs to ensure the availability of a comprehensive set of services in each community. These programs must meet the needs of young children for health care, child care,

*(continued on page 5)*

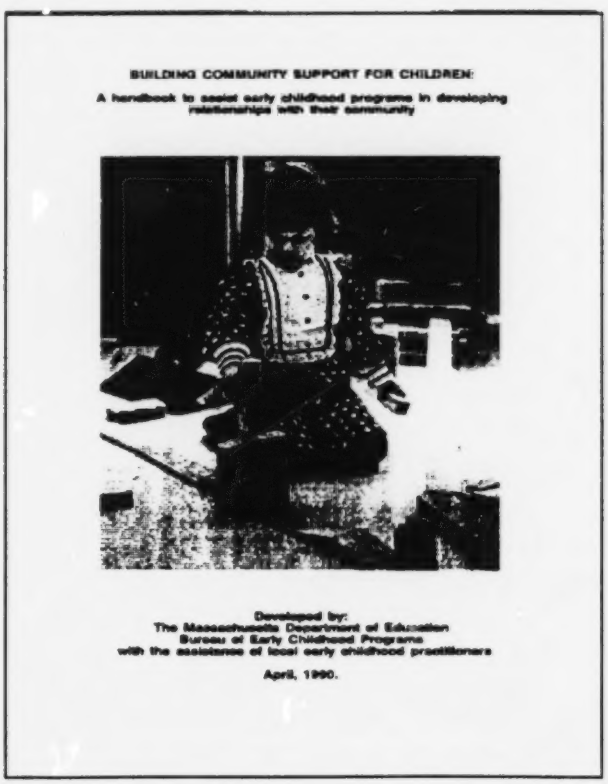
government policies, such as parental leave, which support families and children.

- By opening their doors to programs that operate before and after regular school hours and throughout the year, schools help meet the needs of children of working families.
- Classroom environments are responsive to the individual differences among children and to the cultural and linguistic diversity within the community, and integrate children with a variety of social and educational needs.

## *The Challenge* *(continued from page 2)*

In 1985, the Massachusetts legislature enacted an education reform act which established a new statewide Early Childhood Education Program in the Commonwealth. Seventy-five percent of these funds are targeted for programs for disadvantaged children. The act has established new early childhood programs, most in conjunction with services for young children with special needs, in more than 40 percent of the Commonwealth's public schools and has served over 6,000 children and their families.

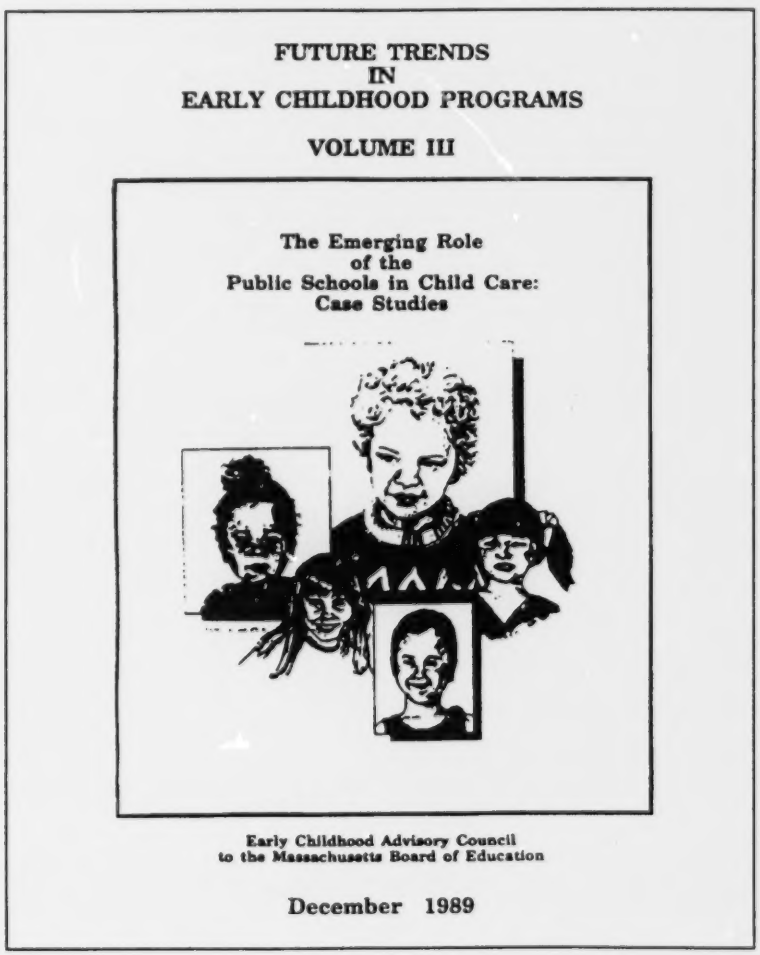
Unfortunately, they are reaching only a small percentage of the children who need them. Recent estimates put the number of disadvantaged children in Massachusetts who would benefit from such programs at about 200,000. The challenge we face is to expand the provision of high-quality early childhood programs to reach as many of these children and their families as possible.


BUILDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN:
A handbook to assist early childhood programs in developing relationships with their community
Developed by:
The Massachusetts Department of Education
Bureau of Early Childhood Programs
with the assistance of local early childhood practitioners
April, 1990.

***The Response*** *(continued from page 3)*

social and emotional development, language development, and cognitive development.

We need to establish community advisory councils, with broad representation from the private and public sectors, which will work under the leadership of a local early childhood coordinator to develop plans utilizing existing community resources and seeking new resources in order to provide high-quality early childhood and after-school programs.



# Parent Involvement: A Critical Element in Children's Education

## *The Challenge*

Parents are an essential educational resource for schools. They are their children's first teachers at home and continue to serve in a teaching capacity when their children enter school. Recent research has confirmed conventional wisdom: parental involvement in a child's education is central to his or her academic success.

Parents can be supporters of public education if they are provided with opportunities to be involved in school decision making. To do this, however, schools will need to take into account the following conditions of our society and the American family:

- *An increase in single parent and two working parent families.* Seventy percent of school children in Massachusetts have working mothers.
- *Persistent intergenerational cycles of school failure and poverty.* In

*(continued on page 8)*

### *THE VISION*

- Education is recognized as a joint responsibility: schools and families are true partners in the education of children and are coproducers of educational excellence and equity. Decisions about schooling are shared among administrators, teachers, and parents and guardians.

## The Response

While the specific programs and practices that can bring this vision to life will vary from community to community, they will be guided by the following principles:

- School systems will have clear policies, practices, and resources affirming the importance of parental involvement in education and providing a variety of roles that parents can play. Parents will be involved in decisions as to how the school's policies, programs and resources can best be targeted to the unique needs and situation of that school. Techniques for working with parents will be included in the certification curriculum of teachers and administrators and be among the topics covered in inservice professional development.

- Parents will enjoy more opportunities to choose schools and educational options for their children. Geography, economics, past history and other

*(continued on page 9)*

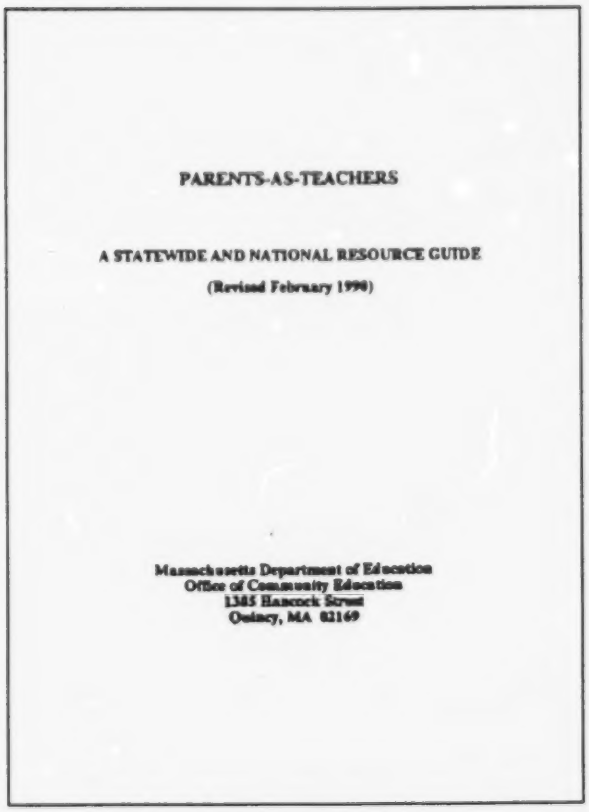
- All families enjoy a wide range of opportunities to be involved in their children's education — in the school, in the home, and in the community.

- Through partnerships between schools and other community agencies, parents are offered training and support for contributing to the education of their children.

## *The Challenge* *(continued from page 6)*

Massachusetts and across the nation statistics show that a mother's level of education is the single most powerful predictor of her children's success at school, and that today's dropouts and at-risk students are likely to be the children of dropouts.

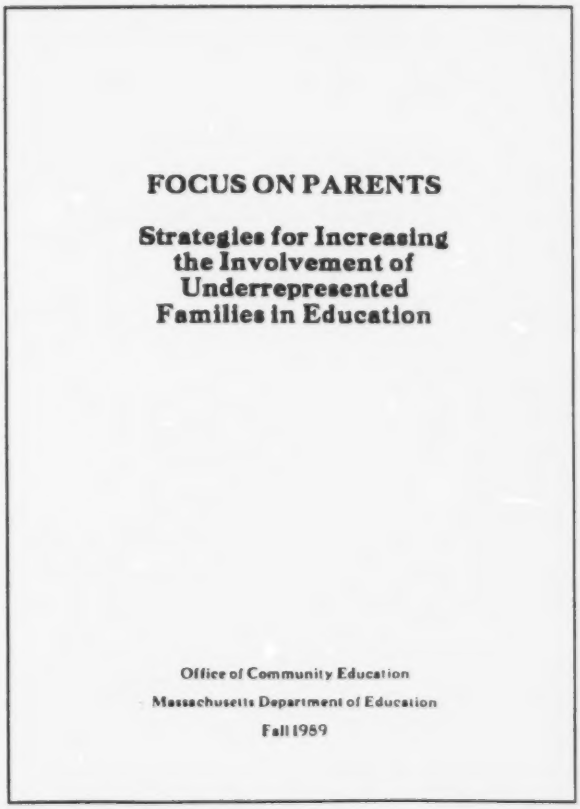
- *Growing consumerism among public school parents.* The annual Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes on Education reveals consistent support for the propositions that parents should have a say in school decisions about budget, personnel, and programs, and that parents should be able to choose which public schools in their communities their children will attend. In the most recent poll, 76 percent of parents with children in public school were in favor of such choice.


PARENTS-AS-TEACHERS

A STATEWIDE AND NATIONAL RESOURCE GUIDE

(Revised February 1990)

Massachusetts Department of Education
Office of Community Education
1385 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169


FOCUS ON PARENTS

Strategies for Increasing the Involvement of Underrepresented Families in Education

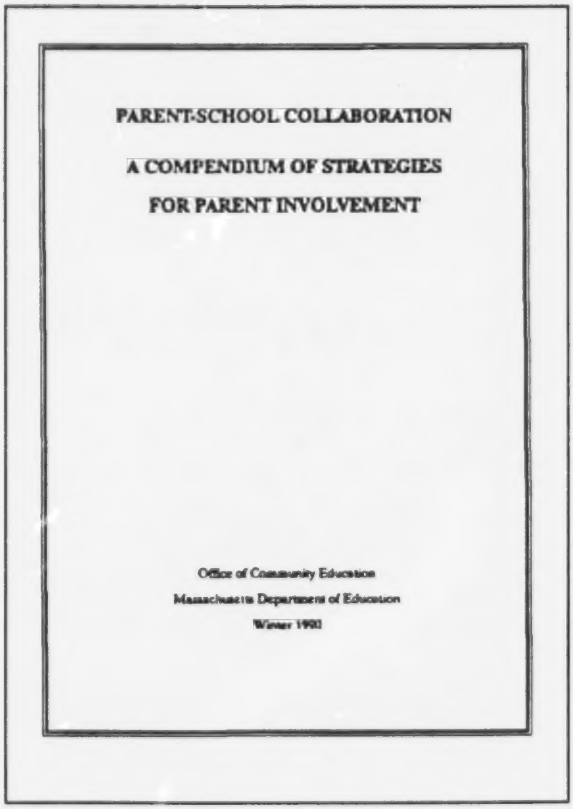
Office of Community Education
Massachusetts Department of Education
Fall 1989

***The Response*** *(continued from page 7)*

related factors will no longer determine the schools their children can attend.

- The school site will become a multi-service community facility: it will house and deliver a variety of social services and day and evening programs; become a focal point for community life; and provide services to strengthen the skill and knowledge base families need to support their children's schooling.

- Employers will provide release time and worksite opportunities for parents to become more involved in their children's education, and schools will collaborate with community-based organizations to reach parents who may not otherwise be involved in the schools.



# Education Personnel: Issues for the 1990s

## *The Challenge*

The failure of the public to recognize the importance of teachers in the lives of students is reflected in the poor professional rewards offered to educators: salaries which are not competitive with other professions requiring a college degree, a lack of educational resources, limited freedom for teachers to manage their classrooms effectively, and few opportunities for stimulating professional growth.

These conditions hinder efforts to attract the best people to the profession, create staff shortages in special education and bilingual education, and may lead to an overall teacher shortage (due to an aging workforce) by the year 2000. In additon, it is essential that we attract greater numbers of minority teachers in order to make use of the diverse human wealth of our society and provide a wider range of powerful roles models for children.

### THE VISION

- Expanded certification opportunities exist for both traditional and non-traditional candidates and.new partnerships among schools, colleges and businesses generate interest in teaching among young people
- Reallocated resources support mentor teacher programs and improved teacher salaries, including greater salary differentiation, and reward and incentive systems.

## The Response

- Recruitment

  Young people interested in the teaching profession can be identified and nurtured by developing collaborative programs (such as pre-teaching academies and magnet schools) between middle schools, high schools, and higher education which generate interest in teaching and provide special academic support.

  By increasing the transferability of credentials and non-classroom teaching experiences, teaching candidates from business and other professions, particularly professions with typically high minority populations (e.g., the military, social service agencies or para-professional occupations), can be successfully recruited. Alternative routes to certification such as the Apprentice Teacher program, the Certification Review Panel and the

*(continued on page 12)*

- There are cohesive and expanded state-sponsored professional development programs and other collaborative programs developed by schools and businesses.

- Programs (such as the northeast regional certificate and pension portability) support teacher mobility.

## ***The Response*** *(continued from page 11)*

Undocumented Educators Project for Southeast Asian Refugees, will continue to be instrumental in these recruiting efforts.

Naturally, an important part of any recruitment effort must concentrate on educating the public on the value and importance of teachers in the lives of students.

- Teacher Preparation and Certification

We must create a new type of teacher — a "reflective practitioner" — who synthesizes ideas, skills, beliefs, and experience as the force driving the teaching and learning of any given subject matter. We must emphasize greater subject matter knowledge for provisional certification, with integration of theory and practice throughout the curriculum. College and university preparation must be complemented by continued growth and learning in and beyond the classroom.

New models of collaboration among higher education, public schools, and business and community leaders in preparing teachers must be encouraged and be supported by continued implementation of a restructured, strengthened, and flexible certification process. By encouraging mobility and reducing unnecessary barriers for entry into the profession, high professional standards can be maintained while increasing the attractiveness of the teaching profession.

- Professional Development

If we are to develop a truly new type of teacher and support that teacher's continued growth, we must develop a cohesive state policy which links college preparation prior to employment with continued learning during employment. Improved methods of school-based management, including job sharing and flexible retention approaches, will stimulate the school organization to support, stimulate and encourage great teaching. Widespread adoption of a value system which welcomes differences and seeks to find and develop potential and capabilities in each and every child would also increase the challanges and rewards of teaching.

Teachers need professional reward and incentive systems, with pay commensurate with that afforded other professionals and greater differentiation between beginning and experienced teacher salaries, and increased mobility based on skill development. The presence of and funding for our most valuable tool in supporting and training new teachers — the mentor teacher — must be ensured. Successful programs, such as the Commonwealth Leadership Academy and Inservice Institute, need to undergo continued development and expansion. New methods of collaboration among business and community leaders that encourage approaches such as employee sabbatical and faculty loan programs must be encouraged and developed.

# School Restructuring

## *The Challenge*

While the American workplace has changed dramatically in the past 50 years, changes in the schools have not kept pace. Rote learning, assembly line approaches to education, and hierarchical authority patterns recall the low-technology factory of yesteryear. They do not nurture the critical thinking, problem solving, and collaborative skills that young people will need for their personal development as they move into the workplace and assume leadership in society.

## THE VISION

- Restructuring is the rule rather than the exception. An ongoing critical examination of school programs and policies by the entire school community is the norm rather than a crisis response.
- Educators are flexible and innovative toward altering basic elements of the school, gaining support for these changes from the community, and accepting accountability based on results rather than adherence to regulations.

## The Response

Restructuring refers to changes in school organization, governance, policies, attitudes, programs, and practices in order to ensure educational opportunity for all children. The process of restructuring will be guided by each school's planning for change that will reflect its unique needs, strengths and history. Restructured schools will be characterized by the following common elements:

- High and explicit goals will be established to ensure that all students are learning and playing an active role in their education. Efforts will be concentrated on the task of identifying, encouraging, and developing students' potential and abilities, and innovative instructional strategies will be used to accommodate their diverse learning styles. The focus will be on the development of higher order thinking skills and the understanding of concepts rather than memorization of facts. While academic achievement is given priority, there will also be support for students' social, emotional and physical needs.

*(continued on page 17)*

- Everyone is a student in the restructured school; everyone a worker. Adults at the school model critical thinking skills, intellectual independence, and initiative-taking for younger and less experienced pupils. Teachers are able to grow in their profession as they create a stimulating world of creative inquiry for students.

# CARNEGIE SCHOOLS AND RESTRUCTURING:

## An ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Compiled by Jan Eagle and Jim Coradonio
Doctoral Students, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Produced by The Office of Planning Research and Evaluation
and the Office of Community Education

DECEMBER, 1988

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

***The Response*** *(continued from page 15)*

- School-based restructuring will explicitly address equity for students and staff in policies, goals, and instructional strategies that value diversity and support integration. Staff, students, parents, and the community will have defined roles in shared decision making that builds ownership of the planning, implementing, and evaluating of school change.

- Parents will be provided with a range of opportunities for training on how best to effectively support the education of their children at home and in school. At the same time, institutions of higher education, human services and community agencies, cultural institutions, and the private sector will be actively involved in efforts to strengthen the school.

- The conditions of teaching will be redesigned in ways that improve instruction and foster professional growth, discretion and accountability. School staff will participate in an expanded decision-making capacity in the school and the school system, and teams of staff members will be provided with common planning and meeting time that allows them to monitor student progress, plan cluster activities, and establish a unified program.

- Smaller learning units, set both in classrooms and, where appropriate, in the community, and flexible scheduling of the school day and yearly calendar will be components of new forms of school organization which expand learning opportunities and create an increased sense of community. All students will be integrated into the programs of the school through multiple avenues and policies will be constantly reviewed for elements that may be inhibiting to student achievement.

# Adult Literacy and Empowerment in Massachusetts

## *The Challenge*

Thirty-two percent, or 1.4 million adults in Massachusetts lack the basic academic and communication skills that are the foundation for social and economic success, a number 50 percent greater than the number of children enrolled in public K-12 education across the Commonwealth. An estimated 10 percent of our state's adults are functionally illiterate, with a less than 5th grade proficiency in reading, writing, and computation.

The ranks of our state's undereducated adults are continuously growing as a result of:

- a state-wide average drop-out rate of 22 percent,

*(continued on page 20)*

## THE VISION

- Services are available without lengthy delays to all who request them.
- Free literacy, English as a Second Language, and adult secondary education services are offered throughout the Commonwealth in accessible, fully staffed, well equipped centers.
- Services are available at the times and in the varying degrees of

## The Response

Stable, multi-year funding will support a statewide system of complementary, coordinated services backed by a comprehensive support network offering up-to-date curriculum and program information, resources and professional development. Competitive salaries and benefits will attract highly competent teachers, counselors, and administrators. Performance standards need to take into account individual student goals and capabilities, and services should be arranged so that adult learners can move easily from one to another (including occupational training and higher education) at the appropriate time to realize those goals.

A detailed blueprint of how we can achieve these objectives has been developed by the Department of Education: The Massachusetts Four Year Plan for Adult Basic Education.

intensity necessary to accommodate the diversified schedules and responsibilities of adult learners.

- Individual student learning programs are based on refined and comprehensive assessments.
- Opportunities exist for group as well as individual learning programs.

## *The Challenge* *(continued from page 18)*

- a steady influx of newcomers with limited English proficiency, and
- the many adults, previously considered to have mastered basic academic skills, who become functionally undereducated as rapid technological change increases the literacy demands of jobs and everyday life.

Current resources are grossly insufficient for an effective response. Adult basic education funding from every conceivable source ($17 million) represents less than one half of one percent of the total expended annually on public education in Massachusetts. Only 45,000, or 3 percent of adults in need of services receive them each year, and an average of only $500 per year is committed to the education of those who are enrolled, resulting in low-intensity services and uneven and unpredictable outcomes.

An intense commitment to K-12 school improvement will gradually reduce the overwhelming number of adults in immediate need of basic skills remediation. However, the rapidly changing job market, spurred by the accelerating pace of technological change, will soon virtually eliminate the notion of a single, lifelong career. Retraining will be required every five to seven years.

# MASSACHUSETTS

# FOUR YEAR PLAN

for

# ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

July 1989 to June 1993

April 1989

Massachusetts Department of Education

# Expanded Strategies for Learning

## *The Challenge*

Lecturing is only one of many strategies for teaching and is not equally effective with all students. Research shows that three of every four students learn better, quicker and more thoroughly from experiences which involve them directly in solving problems, using equipment and materials, and producing results. The extensive experience of vocational educators, who emphasize learning by doing, has demonstrated the efficacy of this approach with students of all abilities and interests.

New programs, such as Principles of Technology, that draw upon the work of both vocational educators and academic subject matter specialists are improving learning outcomes for courses of study from science and mathematics to writing and social studies.

### THE VISION

- All schools have a climate that respects the languages, knowledge levels, abilities, and learning styles of all students.
- Enhanced student achievement and self-esteem result from teaching and learning experiences that engage the students in active learning through problem solving and meeting challenges.

## The Response

Pedagogical practices that assume that the young student can be processed and packaged through a standard curriculum of experiences will be replaced by teaching which draws upon a wide range of developmental activities carefully designed for the individual student and calculated to involve and motivate that student both individually and as a member of teams of students. Curriculum developers will produce materials that involve learning by doing in all of the basic skills and academic disciplines, and pilot programs will break down the artificial separation of vocational-technical and general education.

Achievement test results will measure performance — the student's ability to diagnose, analyze, plan, and solve problems — rather than the ability to memorize and take tests, and will reveal the gains made by teachers and schools whose pedagogy stresses problem-solving over test-taking, and performance over rote memorization.

Accreditation standards for teacher preparation programs will ensure that

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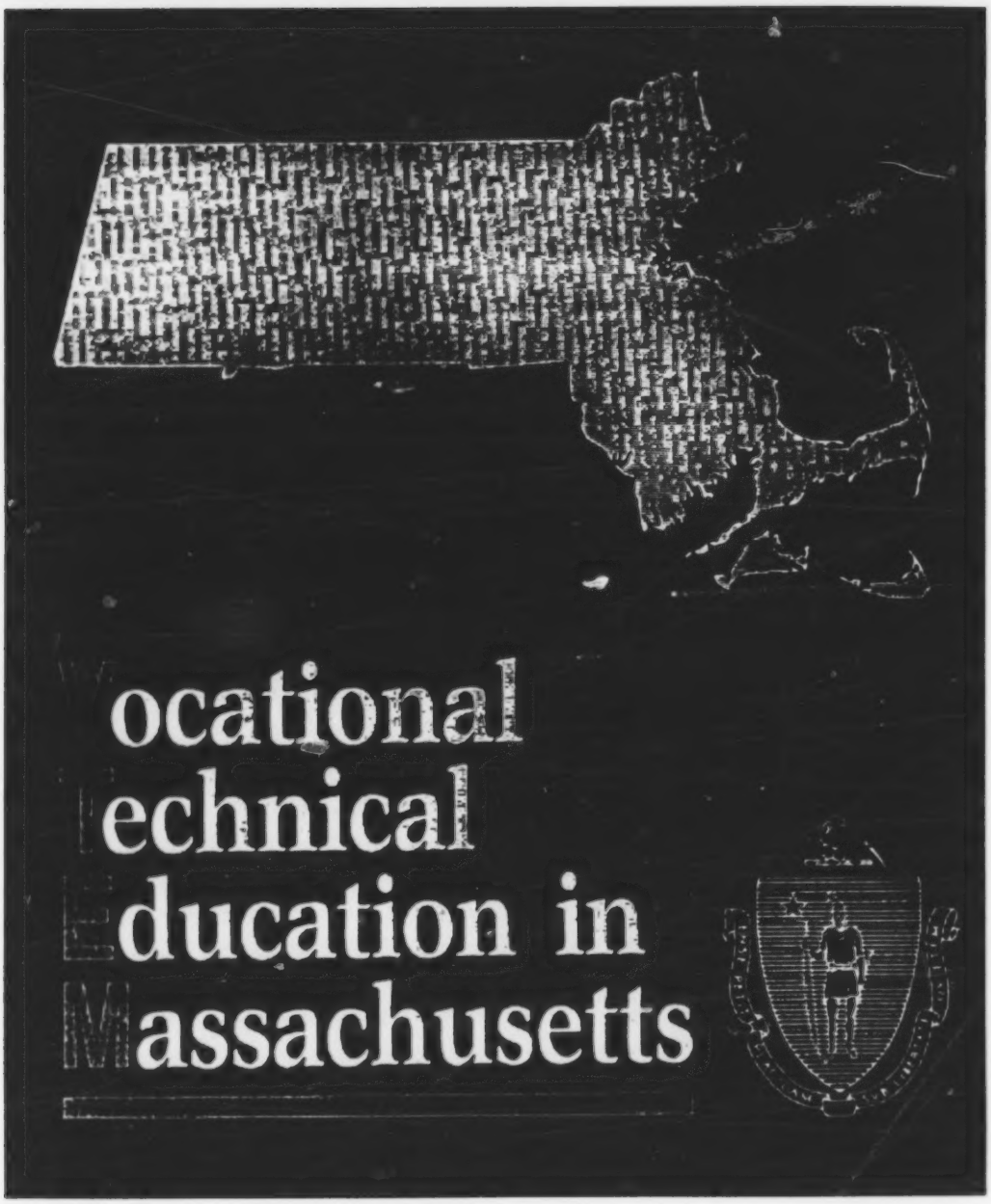
- A wide variety of curriculum materials and teaching styles motivates learning on the part of all students.
- Teachers have an expanded repertoire of pedagogical strategies that include project oriented learning-by-doing approaches.


ocational
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***The Response*** *(continued from page 23)*

learning by doing is a component of the core curriculum for teacher pre-service training. Externships will provide teachers with the opportunity to observe and incorporate the learning-by-doing practices in industry and business and in vocational schools, and experienced learning-by-doing practioners will share their experience and model their techniques in general education settings.

State support for an ongoing conference program will provide opportunities for convening working sessions with teachers from all areas of education, teacher trainers, and curriculum research and development practitioners. Such sessions would promote the dissemination of knowledge about learning by doing and proven pedagogical practices among general and vocational-technical educators.

# IMAGES OF THE FUTURE

## PROPOSED VISIONS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS IN THE 21st CENTURY - PART II

THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HAROLD RAYNOLDS, JR.
COMMISSIONER

OCTOBER 1990

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The following two vision papers are the most recent in a series of eight papers on critical issues in public education. The original six papers have been published as **Images of the Future** and are available through the Office of Community Education, the Massachusetts Department of Education. The two papers presented in this packet will be included in the next printing of **Images of the Future.**

# IMAGES OF THE FUTURE

October 1990

Citizens and Educators of Massachusetts:

These Vision Papers are an open invitation to a dialogue about our shared hopes for the education of the citizens of this Commonwealth. If we can imagine the future, we can create it. Without our imagination, events and inertia may create the future for us.

In the nineteenth century, Massachusetts was a national, indeed international, pioneer in public education. This preeminence has faded. As a state whose major resource is people - skilled, knowledgeable people - Massachusetts has no choice but to reassert its leadership in public education, and in a way that serves and utilizes its extraordinary ethnic and cultural diversity. This leadership, however, must be inspired and informed by a unifying vision of where we must go if we are to provide the foundation for a productive life for all of our citizens.

The attached Vision Papers discuss the critical issue of providing the social and community services that enable students to be able to benefit from their schooling. The papers also include visions for how these issues can be addressed during the next decade. Linking these papers are several themes that reflect the revolutionary social and economic changes that have occurred in the last decade. Addressing these challenges is not only a matter of expanding opportunities for education: it is an issue of fundamental equity.

These papers offer images, not a detailed blueprint. Only action and commitment at the local and state levels can fill in the details and create the future that is the first step toward creating a future in which all children and adults have every opportunity to develop to their maximum potential.

Sincerely,

Harold Raynolds Jr.

Harold Raynolds, Jr.
Commissioner of Education

## LINKING SCHOOLS AND HUMAN SERVICES

## A VISION PAPER

### THE CHALLENGE

Educating all children means addressing the impediments to learning that many children bring with them to school. These barriers can include living in severe poverty, inadequate health care, family illiteracy, teen pregnancy and parenting, abusive family life, substance abuse, AIDS, and homelessness. It is essential that schools pay attention to the needs of the ''whole child'' in order to help children have educational success.

There is presently no one service provider, whether in the school or in the service network in the community, who has an integrated picture of the ''whole child.'' School counselors, teachers, and other school staff may attempt to connect the most needy children to services. However, most teachers are not trained in recognizing or addressing students' emotional and health difficulties and severe cutbacks in schools have resulted in caseloads of 250 to 500 students for each counselor. In addition, school-based staff may lack information on the variety of services that are available in the community.

Social workers, health care providers, childcare workers, and corrections officers often deal with children in piecemeal, crisis-oriented situations that may result in compartmentalized, not coordinated, services for children. Social services for children often fall into overlapping, administrative jurisdictions, none of which have the resources to coordinate services for individual children. These bureaucracies also tend to segregate children's needs into categories, such as child abuse, pregnancy, homelessnesss, drug addiction, etc. A child's needs can get neglected amid inconsistent eligibility requirements, funding streams, and philosophies of intervention and prevention.

### THE VISION

**Coordinated, integrated, social services for students (CISSS) programs** are established in schools across the state to identify, address, and resolve issues that are hindering students' learning.

- Specific individuals in school buildings have responsibility for providing and coordinating remedial and preventive services for students and their families. These individuals function as a ''hub'' that identifies and diagnoses the needs of students and their families and connects them with appropriate services within and outside of the school.

- Schools and community agencies, such as welfare, youth services, and family services, collaborate to provide early identification, prevention, and intervention services for children, support and training for teachers, and referrals for parents who are seeking services for their children.

- State agencies, including education and the array of social, emotional, and health services for children, youth, and families, have developed interagency agreements that encourage collaborative strategies for coordinating and addressing the needs of children. Agencies provide training, technical assistance, and funding that supports cooperative service provision coordinated at the local level.

- Children receive counseling individually and in small groups that helps them resolve or cope with problems and develop respect for themselves and others. In classrooms, children receive lessons on self-understanding, interpersonal skills, decision making, health and nutrition, recognizing abusive behavior, and other issues as appropriate.

- Teachers are trained to be more knowledgeable and effective regarding their responsibility for students' health and sound development.

- Parents are offered workshops on child rearing, child development, and the support that is available from school and community resources.

THE RESPONSE

Through coordinated, integrated, social services for students (CISSS) programs, existing approaches that exemplary schools are using to meet the needs of students are enhanced and expanded.

To support CISSS programs in schools, state level educational and family service agencies develop interagency agreements that facilitate collaboration and cooperation among schools and agencies. They also provide funding that ensures effective collaboration at the local level and reinforce this support with technical assistance, training, and information on model programs.

At the community level, schools and human service agencies are provided with the staffing, time, and resources to develop and offer a comprehensive, coordinated range of services that meet the needs of students. Community collaboration contributes to the development of an ''integrated youth policy'' that expands children's services from crisis intervention to developmental and preventive approaches.

Interdisciplinary teams of teachers, administrators, social workers, parents, civic leaders, and business people are established to oversee the development of collaborative relationships between the school and social service agencies that result in needed services for students. These teams serve in an advisory capacity to specially trained teachers or other school staff who are released to assume the position of CISSS coordinators. CISSS coordinators identify, address and monitor students' emotional and service needs, establish and maintain collaborative relationships with community human service resources, identify and respond to the training and awareness needs of teachers, and develop and implement preventive, informational programs for students and their families.

## THE SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY CENTER

## A VISION PAPER

### THE CHALLENGE

In order to provide successful learning experiences for all children, schools must address the educational, physical, and emotional welfare of the ''whole child.'' However, the needs of children may exceed the expertise and resources of traditional school programs and require the coordinated services of community care givers.

Communities cannot afford to maintain expensive school facilities that are in use for only a few hours each day, 180 days of the year, and that serve only a small fraction of the population. Schools need to generate the community support that results when numbers of local citizens use and benefit from programs in the school buildings.

Parental involvement is acknowledged as a key ingredient in children's academic success. However, there are many parents whom schools have been unable to involve in their children's education. These parents may have had negative childhood experiences with schooling which make them uncomfortable in the school setting or they may be addressing issues of survival which limit their ability to support their children's education.

### THE VISION

**A community center school**, whose facilities are used during and after school hours for an expanded range of activities, becomes a focal point for the entire community:

- Services are provided for citizens from birth to 100 years old. Medical and mental health clinics, social welfare agencies, day care centers, pre-schools, elderly and child feeding and nutrition programs, and regular schools coexist with senior centers, adult learning centers, and continuing education programs. Citizens of all ages use school libraries, the cafeterias, vocational facilities, and recreational equipment -- with multigenerations learning, eating, playing, and being cared for together.

- Teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors, social workers and others who are familiar with students at the school collaborate with agency staff located at the school to share information and ideas that strengthen services for children and families in need.

- Parents with limited English proficiency are able to take ESL and Adult Basic Education classes in the schools while their children are cared for in the day care facilities. Day care is also available for parents in job training programs and for teen parents who are completing their own schooling.

- Adult education programs include workshops on child rearing and on services offered at the schools. Elementary and secondary school

teachers make regular visits to adult learning classes and host visits to their classrooms to familiarize parents with school programs and expectations.

- For parents in single or two working parent families the school serves as a constructive setting for children before and after school.

- School days have been extended by several hours and provide time for physical education, arts and cultural experiences, exploration of occupational areas, and remediation or enrichment as is appropriate for students.

- Community support of the schools is enhanced through the expanded use of school facilities by non-parent community members.

- Through the location of family support programs, employment assessment services, and recreational activities at the community school, the school becomes a familiar setting. Parents are comfortable with being at the school and more likely to support their children's learning experiences.

THE RESPONSE

**Coordinate services for families and children:** The community center school provides for cost effective coordination of services for children and their families through the co-location of these services at the school site. Through this co-location, the community center school:

- Promotes an integrated approach to service delivery for children and their families.

- Increases access for children and their families to a variety of human services through the "one stop shopping center" services of the community center school.

- Facilitates coordination of services through the close proximity of a range of service providers and educators.

**Partnerships with other community groups:** Schools and community agencies enter into partnerships which provide incentives for collaborating such as increased access to clients through the convenient school location, expanded service provision, enhanced ability to obtain vital information on clients and their families, and increased ability to work cooperatively with a network of support services.

**Community involvement:** A Community Center School Advisory Council, composed of school staff, service providers, parents, and community members, meets regularly to oversee the functioning of the Center and to suggest ways to strengthen its services and programs.